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C O N F I D E N T I A L ABUJA 001295

SIPDIS

USEUCOM FOR POLAD SNELL

E.O. 12958: DECL: 07/26/2014

TAGS: [PREL](#) [PGOV](#) [PHUM](#) [MARR](#) [MASS](#) [NI](#)

SUBJECT: SECURITY COOPERATION WITH NIGERIA

REF: A. STATE 155894

[1](#)B. ABUJA 1126

Classified By: AMBASSADOR JOHN CAMPBELL FOR REASONS 1.5 (A), (B) AND (D).
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[1](#)1. (C) Summary: I met with National Security Advisor Aliyu Mohammed at OOB on July 26 to go over the points in reftel. He was strongly supportive of the strategy, and said he would urge President Obasanjo to make a speech incorporating the essential elements included in reftel. He repeated his request to visit USEUCOM (ref B), which this mission strongly supports. End summary.

[1](#)2. (C) Aliyu Mohammed focused on the meat of a proposed presidential statement provided in reftel, noting that there was nothing different from what the President has already said in the past. Nevertheless, he asked me if it was necessary for the president to make the statement, or whether it could be delivered on his behalf. I said that to be credible, the statement should be made by the president and in a public forum. I said that such a statement might provide the confidence that the Obasanjo government would benefit from U.S. security cooperation, but that, obviously, I could not guarantee a positive congressional response. Aliyu Mohammed said that there are two upcoming military graduation events, one in early August, one in early September that would provide the appropriate venue for such a speech.

[1](#)3. (C) When I asked about next steps on Darfur, Aliyu Mohammed responded by saying that Sheikh Sheriff Saleh, a Sufi Imam based in Maiduguri, was seeking to mediate among all of the Sudanese parties. This mediation, he continued, was not sponsored by the Nigerian government, though it certainly supports the effort in principle. The Sheikh is known to embassy Abuja as a well-educated, moderate cleric with a substantial following in the Lake Chad region, including Chad and parts of Cameroon.

[1](#)4. (C) Aliyu Mohammed reiterated his wish to visit USEUCOM (ref B). He said that it is especially important now with the ongoing press attention to alleged U.S. activity in the Gulf of Guinea and the security issues in the Nigerian delta.

[1](#)5. (C) Comment: Aliyu Mohammed wants the restoration of military cooperation with the U.S., sees as workable the proposed statement to be made by President Obasanjo. He has promised to advocate for it with the president. This mission strongly endorses an USEUCOM invitation to Aliyu Mohammed to visit USEUCOM. Such an invitation would benefit U.S. interests whether or not Obasanjo makes the speech we want him to make and whether or not the security relationship is restored. In my judgment, Aliyu Mohammed still has a career ahead of him at the highest levels of Nigerian politics, and he is instinctively pro-American. His cooperation on a wide range of security issues is worth having. End comment.

CAMPBELL